

Mr. Speaker, we in Congress can do many things to enhance the livability of our communities, giving a wide range of opportunities, whether it is requiring the Post Office to play by the same rules as the rest of America by following local land use laws and zoning codes, and maybe even having meaningful public input, or having more rational water policies to help protect and renew our communities' waterways.

But no matter where we are in America and how we define livability, there are several visual indicators that will tell us right away whether or not we are in a healthy neighborhood.

If we are in a community that is free from vandalism, it is a sign of a healthy neighborhood. If there are areas that provide access to walkways and sidewalks that are away from the rush of traffic, it shows respect for the residents. We are in a healthy neighborhood.

If we have opportunities to move away from the blight that has been a plague for many communities, and there is renewal of deteriorated property and housing well-being, it is a sign of a healthy community.

I would think the most basic indicator, however, is whether or not our children are able to move safely through their neighborhood. One simple thing we can do today to promote that livability is to support this resolution and the event that it will enable. It will be the culmination of a nationwide cycling education project. It allows for a youth bike summit to take place here within the shadow of the Capitol dome. It will be the final event of a campaign that has been sponsored, as we have heard, by Earth Force, involving children from all over America who will be in our Nation's Capitol for this event.

These children were asked to devise safe bicycling routes through their communities and share their proposals with their peers. Earth Force has worked with Safe Moves, another nonprofit agency, to design the mock city for the children to ride through, and it teaches children in the ages from the fifth grade through the ninth grade about safe biking techniques.

As we have heard the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. Norton) say, 350,000 children 14 and under were treated in hospital emergency rooms for bicycle-related injuries last year. These collisions with motor vehicles account for 90 percent of all bicycle-related deaths, and 10 percent of all non-fatal related injuries.

Statement in support of using the Capitol grounds for a bike rodeo

Sunday, 11 April 1999 19:00

The nonpartisan Bicycle Caucus supports educating children early in life in safe biking techniques.

I welcome the support of my colleagues on this resolution and I look forward to working with other Members of Congress on strengthening the Federal partnership in making sure that our communities are made more livable and the promotion of safety for our children should be at the top of our list from every Member of Congress.